

REMARKS

In response to the Restriction Requirement dated August 6, 2003, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on September 6, 2003, Applicants request entry and consideration of the following remarks. Although Applicants believe that no fee is due in connection with this response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge counsel's Deposit Account No. 20-0782/AMAT/6298/KMT, for any fees, including extension of time fees or excess claim fees, required to make this response timely and acceptable to the Office.

The Examiner has restricted the claims to one of the following inventions under 35 U.S.C. § 121:

- I. Claims 1-9, drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 204, subclass 276.
- II. Claims 10-24, drawn to a method, classified in class 205, subclass 99.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 1-9 (Group I) are drawn to an apparatus, while claims 10-24 (Group II) are drawn to a method. Further, the Examiner has indicated that the claims in Group II are related to the claims in Group I as a process and an apparatus for its practice. As such, the Examiner has restricted the claims on the basis that the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process, such as an electrolytic etching or an electroless plating process.

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction and submit that the claims of Group I and the claims of Group II are properly prosecuted in a single application. Applicants submit that the Examiner's field of search will be the same for both Groups. Although the Examiner has classified Group I in class 204 and Group II in class 205, Applicants submit that a thorough search of the claims in either Group I or Group II would inherently include a search of both classes, as they are closely related.

Therefore, in view of the remarks above, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement.

Respectfully submitted,



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